

Dear Commissioners:

Please don't allow more media consolidation. When different companies control the TV, radio and print news in my community they compete with each other to provide me better local and national news.

Once upon a time, over-the-air stations were granted a public license to serve in the best interest, convenience, and necessity of the communities in which they operated.

Diversity in media ownership is critical fair and equitable news reporting, community service, and advertising choices. This is essential on both the local and national levels

Due to previous FCC relaxing of ownership rules, one corporation now owns all five commercial radio stations located in our small community of 20,000. Although one of those station's corporate papers carry a different name, everyone knows that it is just a dummy corporation. All are managed and controlled by the same people. The corporation also own several radio stations in a nearby community, which means that they already have a near monopoly on the radio market covering the largest population centers in our corner of the state. Local advertisers find this situation very frustrating.

In addition, this corporation also owns the cable TV system in our community, as well as those in several other surrounding communities, and has recently purchased more cable systems in smaller area communities, and/or created working partnerships with other cable companies.

Another division that they have created serves to sell advertising on various networks on these outside cable systems, as well as their own systems. This division also provides local

community programming on their main system, with simultaneous cablecasting onto three of their closest systems. This programming consists of local news, public information programs, local government meeting coverage, long-form advertising, local sports coverage, and a variety of local programs, all of which are advertiser supported.

This is all great for the local communities.

However, these activities were not initiated by the cable company, or the parent corporation. They were actually started by others outside of the corporation. And, in fact, when the first public service programming of this kind was started in 1991 with a "collaborative" shared revenue agreement, the cable company was reluctant to share in any expenses.

Outside entities also were responsible for the initiation of generating advertising revenues on various cable networks. The revenue stream was subsequently pulled by the cable company and transferred to the sales staff of their parent corporation's radio stations.

Later, in 1993, a newly formed company approached the cable company to greatly expand the scope of local services and entered into a Local Leased Access Channel Agreement. This company operated under this agreement for several years, providing an even wider variety of local programming services than the cable company does today.

After several unsuccessful attempts to "buy out" the independent company, the parent corporation resorted to a refusal to renew the leased access agreement. It is my understanding that this is a blatant violation of FCC rules, yet it was done. The cable company and its parent corporation wanted to continue the programming on their cable systems, but they wanted to control all programming and revenues.

While the parent company/cable company did generate revenues for themselves through the lease agreement, the independent company also represented direct competition for advertising dollars to their radio stations, and also to the advertising dollars that were generated through the sales of commercial airtime on the cable networks. The parent corporation and cable company, along with their sister radio stations, in effect forced a faction of advertising revenue competition out of the market.

This does not serve in the best interest, convenience, and necessity of the communities served.

I don't want the same company that owns my TV station or my radio station to also own my newspaper I would just get the same news all over again.

I rely on the media to find out about national and local issues. I want to feel confident that I can get all the viewpoints I need to make well-reasoned decisions about these issues. I also want media outlets in my town to care about my needs and interests.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. I look forward to hearing from you about your efforts to ensure diversity, localism and independence in our media.

Sincerely,
Sunell Koerner